

NEW YORK BY LAMP LIGHT.

Important Report from the Commissioner of Streets and Lamps.

Information for the People.

Department of Streets and Lamps.
To THE HONORABLE THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK:
Gentlemen: In conformity with the requirements of the amended charter of 1849, I herewith transmit to you my report on the Bureau of Lamps and Gas for the year 1863.

Appropriation \$269,700 00
Expended 269,063 91

Balance 636 09

There have been removed from the lower districts and erected in the upper, eight hundred and eleven lamps; and in the middle districts, eight hundred and twenty-three. The number of gas-poles put up is seven hundred and forty-nine—making the whole number of gas-lights now burning eight thousand eight hundred and eighty-four. Total city lamps eight thousand eight hundred and eighty-four.

The distance of mains laid by the New York Gas Company, under my direction, is twenty miles; the whole distance for them is ninety miles, which completes their entire distance. The company has signified their readiness to put up as soon as this department is ready to furnish them.

The Manhattan Gas Company laid last year twenty-seven miles of mains, at a cost of \$35,336 20, making in that company's district one hundred and thirty-nine miles. The distance of mains in the city is two hundred and twenty-nine miles. The amount laid last year is competent to supply four hundred lamps more than are now burning.

The number of lamps lighted by the New York Gas Company is 8,145
Do. Manhattan 6,639

Total gas lamps 14,784

The New York Gas Company light the following public places, markets, &c.:

Halls of Justice.
Police Station. Barclay street.
Do. do. Beekman street.
Do. do. Park.
Do. do. Centre Market.
Do. do. Gouverneur street.
Do. do. Hester street.
Do. do. Leonard street.
Do. do. Oak street.
Do. do. Slip.
Do. do. Trinity place.
Markets.
Do. do. Catharine.
Do. do. Fulton.
Do. do. Fish.
Do. do. Water.
Do. do. Country.
Do. do. Washington.
Courts, &c. Supreme.
Corporation. Attorney's office.

The Manhattan Gas Light Company have laid mains, as follows:

Seventh avenue, west side, from Greenwich avenue to Fourteenth street.
Fourth street, from Thirtieth to Amos street.
Thirteenth street, from Eighth to Tenth avenue.
Leroy street, Amos street.
Perry street, Charles street.
Bank street, Broadway street.
Morton street, from Avenue A to the Downing street.
Bedford street, Cornelia street.
Jones street, Commerce street.
Factory street, Grove street.
Bethune street, Troy street.
Christopher street, Broadway street.
Twelfth street, Weehawken street.
Jay street, Gansevoort street.
Greenwich street, Ninth avenue.
Fourth street, from Ninth to Tenth avenue.
Seventh avenue, from Fourteenth to Twenty-third street.
Sixteenth street, from Sixth to Ninth avenue.
Seventeenth street, Eighth street.
Nineteenth street, from Sixth to Ninth avenue.
Twentieth street, Tenth avenue.
Fifth street, from First to Second avenue.
Sixth street, from Avenue A to Bowery.
Seventh street, from Lewis street to Avenue C.
Eighth street, from Avenue B to C.
Ninth street, from Avenue B to C.
Eleventh street, from Avenue B to C, and from First to Second avenue.
Twelfth street, from Avenue C to Second avenue.
Sixteenth street, from First avenue to Skyscraper square.
Twentieth street, from Avenue A to East river.
Nineteenth street, east of First avenue.
Eighteenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Seventeenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Sixteenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Fifteenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Fourteenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Thirteenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Twelfth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Eleventh street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Tenth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Ninth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Eighth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Seventh street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Sixth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Fifth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Fourth street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Third street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
Second street, from Avenue A to First avenue.
First street, from Avenue A to First avenue.

Market increase for lighting, \$151,271 64

I have issued proposals for 1,000 additional gas posts, the cost of which will be about \$24 each, to purchase, put up, and prepare for lighting, or an increase of \$24,000 on the above, for gas posts alone, when ready; and if for 1,500 hours, an additional cost will be \$15,000—being an additional cost of present expense for lighting of \$39,000. If for 3,500 hours, \$24,750, or an increased expense on the above calculated at \$48,750.

Complaints are constantly being made through the public press, of the omission on the part of some of the lamplighters not properly lighting the oil lamps.

The Superintendent of Streets and Lamps, who has the control of the lighting, &c., cannot remedy any fault of the lamplighters, properly informed, without the fact. Such complaint must be made at the office of the Commissioner of Streets and Lamps, or at the office of the Superintendent of Lamps, 129 Mercer street, instead of at the office of the Chief of Police.

The ordinances regulating the duties of the lamplighters, section 304, speaking of the duties of the Superintendent of Lamps and Gas, reads as follows:

"He shall forthwith report to the Commissioner of Streets and Lamps, all violations of any contract for the lighting of the city with oil or gas, for the lighting of public lamps, and every omission or neglect on the part of any person whose duty it is to clean, trim, or light the same, and if such omission or neglect shall occur on the part of any policeman or other officer of the city, he shall be liable to be removed from office with report the same to the Mayor."

I would now respectfully call your attention to the subject of lighting the wharves and piers with gas, as it is a subject of great importance, and it would be well to remember that there are some 140 oil piers; each pier would require at least two lamps, beside one between each pier, on the bulkheads, which would make some 420 oil lamps more, which, at the present cost of \$14 per lamp per year, would cost \$7,300, or \$10,467 at \$24 a lamp for 3,500 hours, together with the additional expense of putting up the posts, &c., on the docks and piers, which would not cost less than \$25,000 for the first year.

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The gas pipes in nearly all the markets were so small, causing much dissatisfaction among those business men who were the subject of much complaint among the butchers.

They have all been altered, and new lamps placed wherever required, and, I believe, now give comparative satisfaction.

Since I have occupied the position of Commissioner of Streets and Lamps, a great deal has been said about the subject of lighting the city every night.

A resolution passed by your honorable body recently, has caused me to give the subject a thorough examination. The result of my examination is as follows:

"Resolved, That the Commissioner of Streets and Lamps be directed to report to this Board the time each night, at the different seasons of the year, of lighting public lamps in the city, which nights they are lighted, how long they are lighted, and when not lighted, and why not, and also other information on the subject."

In answer to this inquiry, I would state, that it never has been the custom in this city, nor, as far as I can ascertain, in any other city in the Union, to light the street lamps during the moonlight nights.

When the moon gives light during a portion of the night, the lamps are kept burning during the remainder of the night, and the times of lighting and extinguishing them determined by the rising and setting of the moon. When the moon is not visible, the lamps burn from dark until daylight. When the lamps burn all night in summer, and about thirteen hours per night in winter.

The contract between the city and the Manhattan Gas Company contains the following clause:

"Also shall all party of the second part shall fill up and light all the public lamps required by the Corporation wherever the pipes of the company are, and shall be laid with mains in the district aforesaid, and shall be lighted during the whole time of the year, and shall be lighted during such times as the public lamps throughout the city of New York are required to be lighted by the regulations of the said parties of the first part, and the said party of the second part, situated within the district aforesaid, shall be required by the Corporation aforesaid, shall be supplied and lighted by the said parties of the second part, at the yearly rate of fifteen dollars for each lamp, for the light and for lighting and extinguishing the same; and that the parties of the first part may, at any time, require that effect that all or any portion of the street lamps shall be lighted and kept burning at any other time or times during the continuance of this contract, and said parties of the second part shall light the same and continue them burning in accordance with any and every direction of the said parties of the first part, or their proper agent or agent in that behalf authorized, in conformity with the direction of the said parties of the first part, the whole number of hours during which the said lamps, or a portion of them, are kept burning in any year shall exceed the average number of hours during which the public lamps in the city of New York have been kept burning during the last five years prior to the date of this contract, (which the parties hereto estimate to be, and is, at two thousand and three hundred hours.) and that the said parties of the second part shall be entitled to claim and secure for such additional number of hours during which the public lamps, or a portion of them, in the district aforesaid, are kept burning, in accordance with the direction of the said parties of the first part, an additional compensation equivalent to a pro rata increase of the compensation heretofore allowed, proportioned to the increased number of hours beyond the said average number."

It would seem from the extract above quoted, that the parties to this contract were of opinion, that the time would come when it would be deemed necessary or advisable to change the times of lighting and extinguishing the lamps, and that they intended to provide accordingly, according to the city and the right to make such alteration as its wants or convenience might seem to require. If, in the opinion of the Common Council, it should be deemed necessary or advisable to make any change in the times of lighting and extinguishing the public lamps, or in the number of lamps to be lighted, this department will cheerfully comply with their instructions. I do not, however, believe in hasty legislation. The public mind should be fully informed in any case, and I deem it to be in a peculiarly important sense, as well as for public convenience, to have New York lighted well, and economically, that it may compare in this particular favorably with any city in the world, is my most earnest wish, and an earnest wish of the people of New York.

I have obtained the following statement in regard to lighting the different cities of Great Britain, which I believe to be accurate:

In Liverpool, the lamps are lighted every night in winter, but in summer they omit moonlight nights, say five nights in each month. They lighted half an hour after sunset, and extinguished half an hour before sunrise, and burn about 3,500 hours per year.

In London, Birmingham, and other cities, the lamps are lighted every night, and burn from sunset to sunrise. The average is 12 hours per night, or 4,380 hours per year.

The cost of lighting the above cities I have not been able to ascertain. The city of Brooklyn pays the Gas Company \$2.50 per thousand feet for the cost of the lamps, and \$1.25 for the cost of the gas. The city of Boston, \$2.50 per thousand feet; and New York, about \$1.70 per thousand feet.

If the public lamps in the city of New York were lighted every night in the year, they would burn about 3,500 hours. Then each lamp would cost the city—If for 3,500 hours, \$24 75; If for 1,500 hours, \$10 46 75; If for 500 hours, \$3 50.

Being an increase on the present cost of \$8 68, or \$7 78 per annum on each lamp.

At \$15 per annum, for 2,300 hrs., the cost is \$322,750 00; at \$24 75 per annum, for 3,500 hrs., the cost is \$126,707 13; at \$24 75 per annum, for 3,500 hrs., the cost is \$126,707 13; at \$24 75 per annum, for 3,500 hrs., the cost is \$126,707 13.

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